

Dear Senate Inquiry - Shared Parental Responsibility Bill 2005

This is a my submission to the Senate Inquiry into the provisions of the Family Law Amendment (Shared Parental Responsibility) Bill 2005

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a single mother of two children and i am TOTALLY FOR these new laws that are to be put in place. I believe that children need as much time with their father as they do their mother because they need both role models to successfully grow and learn in this ever-changing world. Each child deserves the right to have the same amount of time with each parent, just as each parent deserves the right to watch their child grow up, learn and help them along in life. In the situation separated families are today, great fathers have to watch from the sidelines as their children grow up a weekend at a time, all because they were born the wrong gender. Fathers are as much a nurturer as a mother is, only they cannot breast feed the child when it is a baby. They can hold them, teach them, kiss them and tell them everything will be ok. They can take them to school, feed them, clothe them... and alot of fathers do this all by themselves. And on the other hand, alot of men go out to work and are put in the 'bread winner' role, only to have that thrown back at them in court. Is this fair? No... Should something be done? Yes. If a woman can have sole custordy and continue to work, why cannot the parental responceibilities be shared by both parents involved? It did not take 1 person to make the child, so why should one person get to take the child ALL the time when it is best for the children to have equal amount of time with BOTH their parents? Have YOU ever had to take back a screaming child who clings to your body and says that she'wants to stay longer with daddy'? Only to have to kiss her goodbye and get in your car and have to resist the urge to run in and take them back? I have seen this occur before and it is completely devastating to watch a man cry as he has to leave his baby in the arms of someone else she doesnt want to be with, only because she got the right to 'keep her' because she is a woman.

I have personally seen the changes in someone who has now implemented this practice without a law, only because the mother of this child knew how important it was that her daughter have equal time with her father. She and the father agreed that they would live within a close proximity of eachother and their daughters school so that her life would not be too disrupted by this change. And it wasnt. I have now seen a side to this girl that i never thought i would. She is much happier, her confidence has increased, and she is more outgoing and is continuing to grow and learn new things at a phenomenal rate. She tells me all the time how she loves to spend time with both her parents because she doesnt have to miss them and i can see that she is much happier in general!

The idea that woman would be more at risk to domestic violence because fathers had more time with their children is just a plain out fabrication on someones behalf because if you think about it LOGICALLY, you'd see that both Woman & Men have the same risk of being voilent towards eachother. I remember living at a block of units under 1 1/2 yrs ago, only to hear screaming from downstairs. Here was our very gentle, quiet and nice neighbour who had just got his children for the weekend, being verbally abused severely by his ex wife. She was much larger than he was, and she was screaming extremely loud and threatening to hit and beat him all because she did not like the fact that he was 3 minutes late the previous time to drop his children off. After she left, I spoke to my neighbour who told me that he had to leave his previous relationship because he was being both physically and verbally abused constantly and could not survive full-time in that abusive relationship. He continued to get that AFTER they divorced and whilst he was living away from her and SHE was the one who had full custordy of the children. I would be more worried about her hitting the children than i would of him EVER lifting a finger towards his ex. And, to this day i know atleast a dozen men in this same situation.

I also know of other situations where parents who have the sole custordy of the child, abuse them or let them be abused by their 'new' partners. I know of one

man in particular who is not allowed to even speak to his children because his wife is so vindictive and spiteful and decided that she did not want the kids to see him ever again, just because. SHE ran off with another man who now hits and beats the children and herself and she does nothing to protect them, and because their REAL father is not allowed to see them, he cannot protect them from the danger they are in.

Equal Custordy is the Safest and Fairest solution that has been put onto the table now, and someone nasty has decided to attempt to block this. All because they think that women should have the sole right to care for the child because they carried it in their womb for 9 months. I know that nearly every good father would say that if they couldve done it they would, if it meant they got to spend that time with their kids! Children need BOTH their parents, it is simply the fairest way to sort this whole mess out. Great Fathers should not be left to wonder how their child got so big over a two week period or not be allowed to spend a fair amount of time with their kids to make that positive impact on their lives. It's not fair that fathers are just a passing blip on a childs radar when they should have a semi-full time role in their life. One alternating FULL week with their child is SO much better than 2 days every two weeks and the occasional full week in the holidays. LETS BE FAIR ABOUT THIS!

REMEMBER! It takes two to make a child, their are two parents that love the child, and two parents that should raise the child... Why should we forget the last bit?

Thank you for reading my submission

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